1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

787 mountain and asked the spirit that appeared to him for a love-medicine
832 which would bring him the woman. Soon after, she would come to him and try to obtain his love, but usually he would reject her, for a time at least, by way of revenge.

A young middle-aged man of the present time is noted for his love-medicine. He tells the following. He was once in love with a woman who only reviled him. For a long time this was on his mind. Constantly thinking of her harsh treatment of him, he fasted in a number of places, and finally received supernatural power. Then the woman came to him. She kissed him on the cheek; but he said, "You have abused me," and he made her go away. Four times she came to him; only the fourth time did he consent to gratify her wishes. Since that time, he has frequently used his medicine. His present wife was living with a white trader, where she had every comfort and great abundance; but by his medicine he made her leave the trader for him. His wife, it would appear, looks upon his powers without jealousy. He sells the use of his medicine to young men for two horses. His young son is crippled, so that he would have difficulty in winning women; but his father is keeping the medicine for him, so that he will be able to possess any woman he desires. The objects used include several medicine-plants. Some of these appear to be used to incense the man who is making the
[824] medicine. When a woman is unusually obdurate, wild parsnip (the root supposed to produce the peculiar state of mind of the crazy-dance) is employed by this man. When he begins to exert his influence on a woman, she becomes restless and sexually excited. She leaves the tent frequently, and will cohabit with any man. When the influence of the medicine is removed, she remains faithful to her lover.

MEDICINES AND PLANTS.

278 The following medicines, consisting chiefly of plants, are almost wholly
●757 family remedies, and, while no doubt also used by medicine-men, their supposed effects are generally known, and not connected with any personal supernatural experiences of the person using them. As the specimens were secured in winter, it was impossible to obtain material for botanical identification.

Wanouwasō ("wart-medicine"), a root, is used for stomach-ache (specimen Museum No. 50-1890).

A root called ahaⁿtjiniçaⁿ ("wood-like") is used for colic. This seems to be the root of a species of Asclepias (specimen Museum No. 50-1836).

A root called baasō ("red medicine," because it is reddish when fresh) is used for diarrhœa (specimen Museum No. 50-1914).

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called hâyaa"t[a] is used both as a perfume and as a medicine. Pieces of it tied by a string to the shoulder of the shirt give a pleasant smell. It is also laid in warm water without being boiled, and the water is then used as medicine for sore eyes (specimen Museum No. 50-1883). 278 757

In case of snow-blindness, charcoal is put around the eyes, and believed to be very efficacious.

The green stems of a plant containing a white juice are used for women who have no milk. The Arapaho use the same plant for a similar purpose, and call it "milk liquid."[1]

A root called bâetset ("hand," on account of the peculiar conformation of the roots) is laid in very small quantity into cold water, which is drunk by women to insure easy child-birth (specimen Museum No. 50-1946). [844]

The flowers of a composita called niha"ăñnou ("yellow-head") or tjitjixta"sibyiisôô are put on coals for a woman who has given birth. She stands above the fire to incense herself (specimen Museum No. 50-1944).

Another plant called niha"năñnou ("yellow-head"), which grows close to the water, is boiled, and drunk for pain in the back or in the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1945).

A root called niitason ("sharp") is pulverized, and then applied to sores in the mouth and on the tongue (specimen Museum No. 50-1838).

A rock lichen called benaatsôn is chewed for a sore mouth (specimen Museum No. 50-1874).

The root of tyatyaniçâ is obtained from swampy land far to the north of the Gros Ventre habitat. The roots are soaked in water and the black portions removed. Then they are grated, mixed with water, and applied to the neck for sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1907).

A root called kouh'ya" is chewed until a sticky paste results, which is applied to sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1919).

A fungus called tsiiadjina" is set on fire, and when glowing is applied to wounds or sores. It is also pulverized, and put on the gums of children when they are teething. It is said to grow on birch-trees, near the root (specimen Museum No. 50-1837). [752]

The roots of iniitsôô are boiled and the water used to wash the part of the body which has been burned by the application of the glowing fungus tsiiadjina" (specimen Museum No. 50-1856). [752]

Ilyaa"tou-leaves, which are also used as incense, are boiled in water. This is then applied to the body to allay pain (specimen Museum No. 50-1780). This medicine is the Arapaho niiban"tou or iban"tou (fir or similar leaves), used both as incense[2] and as medicine.[3]

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 438.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 32.
[3] Ibid., Part IV, p. 426.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

278
●757 Na"kasö ("white medicine") is a fungus growing high on pine-trees. It has a general use for any disease (specimen Museum No. 50–1796).

The leaves of ka"kadyikou, growing in the mountains, are boiled, and the tea used as medicine for various purposes (specimen Museum No. 50–1897).

[752] The bark of iinaa"söönicou is either chewed in the native state, or boiled and drunk, for hemorrhages and pain in the back. The plant is said not to grow in the Gros Ventre country (specimen Museum No. 50–1943).

Tawaa"nasöö-root is used for pleurisy and heart-sickness. It is said to taste sweet. The root is either chewed, or boiled and drunk. This is the Arapaho häçawaanaxu, and is much used in the age-ceremonies of both tribes (specimen Museum No. 50–1855).

Juniper-berries (çää"touwun) are a cure for asthma. They are either eaten entire, or they are pulverized and boiled, and the water drunk. The leaves, called "çää"touwuusöö," are mixed with the root, and then used as a remedy for hemorrhage. The leaves are also used by the doctors to incense themselves before they begin to doctor (specimen Museum No. 50–1854).

The root called niäätä", used by the Arapaho ceremonially and as an ingredient for incense, is employed by the Gros Ventre as a remedy for tuberculosis and hemorrhages. It is said not to be used as incense. The root is boiled before being used. It is eaten in the solid state, or a decoction of it is drunk (specimen Museum No. 50–1793).

The root of naw'asöö ("fish medicine") is eaten for colds (specimen Museum No. 50–1794).

Niitsiça" ("hollow root") is primarily a horse-medicine. It is given to horses to strengthen and refresh them. People also use a decoction of it as a remedy for colds (specimen Museum No. 50–1795).

Niha"nisö ("yellow medicine") is used for colds. Either the root is eaten, or water in which it has been boiled is drunk (specimen Museum No. 50–1799).

A plant which grows north of the Gros Ventre country, and for which they appear to have no name, is used for colds and sore throat, a small quantity of the root being chewed (specimen Museum No. 50–1848).

A root called taw'haa" is obtained from other tribes. The plant is said not to grow in the Gros Ventre country. It is pounded and used as snuff in order to clear the head in case of cold or headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1797).

The stems and leaves of waasöwahaa", a sweet peppermint, are used for headache. The plant is also drunk as tea (specimen Museum No. 50–1791).

The root called wanaa"sübyaa" ("smelling loud") is smoked in the pipe against headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1798).

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called tyäñänou is used as perfume, as a wash for the hair, and as a minor medicine. Bunches of the plant were used as perfume. A tea boiled of it is thought to make the hair grow while perfuming it. Such a tea is also poured into the nostrils as a remedy for headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1920).

Niibyouäxtjin is used as perfume. The stems and leaves are chewed, and applied to the body (specimen Museum No. 50–1853).

Tsau"sübin is used as perfume. It is chewed, and rubbed on the hair (specimen Museum No. 50–1792).

One ingredient of incense is the callosity from the leg of a horse above the knee. This is cut up fine, and burned with sweet-grass. It is also worn on the body on a string.

Pine-nuts or other conifer-seeds are used for pemmican (specimen Museum No. 50–1913).

For embroidery, dark fibrous water-plants, at"hin (the Arapaho atahiina"), are used (specimen Museum No. 50 1891).

Quills are dyed yellow with a solution from a conifer-lichen, no doubt the widely used *Evernia vulpina*, called otsahua" (specimen Museum No. 50 1873).

TRIBAL CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre ceremonial organization is akin to that of the Arapaho with such differences as would be expected from the differences in language and the period of separation of the two tribes. The fundamental feature of this organization, the grouping of men by ages and the observance of a series of a half-dozen ceremonies in order according to age, is common to the two tribes. The ceremonies vary somewhat, and in a few cases their names or order have been changed; but among both tribes there are about six regular consecutive men's ceremonies, one or two that are preliminary or somewhat outside of this series, a single ceremony for women corresponding to those for men, and the sun-dance, which is included by the Indians in the enumeration of their grouped ceremonies, but differs from the others in not being connected with age, or with any society-like association of individuals.

Among the Gros Ventre the dancing-lodge for these ceremonies — which is erected in the centre of the camp-circle, and, like this, opens to the east — is constructed of two large tents. The lodge is open above, and appears to be oval or round in shape. The dancers, before beginning the ceremony, secure old men, who are called their "grandfathers," and are their instruct-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

276 778 The sacred flat-pipe was also used in the sun-dance. It was once captured in war. Then the man who took it had bad dreams, until the pipe spoke to him in his dream and said, "Return me, or your tribe will be [728] destroyed." Then this man brought back the pipe, and his tribe made peace with the Gros Ventre.

343 782 The making of a sweat-house was not restricted to certain persons. A man wishing success in war would make a sweat-house for another person, in order that he might accomplish the deed he had in mind. Or, if a person was sick, one of his relatives might pledge to make a sweat-house for him, just as he would a dance. In this case the sick person himself would not necessarily use the sweat-house. On the other hand, a doctor might prescribe sweating for a patient, and in this case the sick person would enter the sweat-house.

[757]

343 .515 [237]

Fig. 43 (50–4355). Sweat-house Tail. Length, 36 cm.

About twelve or fourteen willow poles were cut for the sweat-house. The entrance always faced the sunrise, and a small cottonwood-tree was erected in front of it. To this, calico or other property was tied by an old man as a gift to the sun. The cloth was partly blackened, the corners being rubbed with charcoal.

When all the participants were inside, the blankets were pulled down and the house closed tight. Water was poured on hot stones, at first five times. Thereupon the lodge was opened at the entrance and at the opposite west end, and the people cooled. It was then closed again, and this time water was poured on the rocks seven times. After cooling once more, water was poured on the rocks nine times. The fourth time, the man that poured the water could put as much or as little on the stones as he wished. After the fourth time, the participants came out and bathed. [757] If they were suffering from pain, they whipped that part of the body with buffalo or horse tails. This practice made the heat greatest at that point, much as if it were beaten into the body.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

343 757

A man who pledges and erects a sweat-house does not participate in the sweating. He makes the fire, heats the rocks and passes them into the house, raises and lowers the blankets, and performs other services.

[237]

In sweating, animal tails were sometimes used to beat the body with. Fig. 43 shows such an implement, made of the tail of a buffalo, on a stick handle cased in the skin of the tail. This object is similar to the Arapaho specimens described in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History" (Vol. XVIII, p. 316), but is noticeable for the shortness of the hair on the tail.

343 757 776

When people were called to come to sweat, hixteib'nix'a"t ("Above-Nix'a"t") was first called to sweat with them. Then the people were called. This personage, whose name also means "Above-white-man," is said to have been prayed to before the whites were known; but the Gros Ventre, like the Arapaho, state that they do not know whether he is identical with the Nix'a"t of their myths. Ordinary prayers were always addressed first to hixteib'nix'a"t or to iiçanânin ("our father"), then the sun and moon would be mentioned, next the sacred pipes, and then the earth. After these had been mentioned, anything else could be prayed to.

[30]

778

A charm tied on horses to make them run fast consists of rabbit-feet painted red and tied together. The Arapaho used rabbits' feet for the same purpose.

Specimen Museum No. 50 1804 is a pair of wild-cat-tails worn by young men at the shoulder, or at the heel of a moccasin. They were also tied to children's belts, next to the skin, in order to keep them from wetting the bed.

[51]

Fig. 44 (50-4280). Thunder-stone Necklace. Length, 21 cm.

[30] 237

Specimen Museum No. 50 1803 is a gorget (commonly called by the Indians in English "moon-shell") said to have been made in the old way from an intervertebral disk of a buffalo. At present these objects are usually slightly concave, and are made of china.

The Gros Ventre, according to Dr. Clark Wissler, call certain corrugated fossil stones "thunder-stones."[1] The Assiniboine seem to use the same name. The Blackfeet, who perhaps have most developed the cult of these objects, call them "buffalo-stones." A specimen from the Northern Arapaho is shown in the "Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural

[1] [These are probably AMMONITE septa. - Analyst]

846 self had to get up sooner and help with cooking because she was an only wife, except for the short time during her first marriage when her sister was co-wife. The midwife usually stayed and looked after the infant for a few days, at least until the cord came off.

Coming Daylight always put on a belt of rawhide about a foot wide immediately after delivery and laced it up tighter each day. She said the Gros Ventre women were strict about this practice as it "put the figure back into place."

If a woman were able to rest quietly after childbirth the flow should stop in about two weeks. If she worked, it was longer, perhaps a month. At any rate, after the flow stopped, a woman wrapped a blanket around herself and someone then held under the blanket a pan of live coals on which medicine had been sprinkled. Woman claimed they felt much better after this "fumigation." There was also another medicine which Coming Daylight described as "good to clean you out after childbirth." This was made from a powdered root, a little pinch of which was put in a couple of quarts of water and turned the water about the color of tea. There was no bitter taste and the patient drank it like tea and instead of water.

[757]

[834] It was said that Gros Ventre men did not resume marital relations until at least a month after the baby was born,—often they deferred the resumption of relations even longer.

853 There was medicine given to make the mother's milk come. It was made from the same root as that used in the Crazy Dance.
[278] The infant was not put to the breast immediately, as someone else drew out the "first milk" (colostrum) and spit it out. "After
[825] that, the milk would be the right blue color. Should a woman be all alone when her child was born, she might have puppies draw out that 'first milk.'" Cora believes it is absolutely necessary to follow this rule. When her own daughter, for example, delivered her firstborn, an old woman offered to draw off this "first milk," but the daughter refused—so now she can give milk only from one breast and has to supplement her infant's feeding with milk from a bottle. No water or oil was given the infant before its first nursing. They started the baby to nurse after the colostrum had been drawn off "because there is something in the mother's milk that cleans the baby out."

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

might even 'fuss' a little with him, saying something like: 'Look at you! I thought I told you to urinate. I'm trying to make you do it at the right time, and you want to hold back!' But we were not harsh with infants because we knew they have to learn. Anyway, if you misjudged the time, all you had to do was to throw out the powdered chips and put in fresh ones. The old way was much better. These diaper-babies around here now are much more trouble."

If a child developed enuresis, a tiny bit of the tail of a fox or of a beaver tied to his belt, or a piece of badger skin for him to sit on, was thought to guarantee a cure.

To help the child who had trouble teething, it was considered wise to kill a mouse, skin it, take the back thigh and, after cooking it well, rub on the gums. It is said by Coming Daylight that the Crow used fish for this purpose. Some children have such a difficult time that their gums are very sore and their tongues even swell. Coming Daylight's grandmother and others knew how to remedy that condition. The doctor, using a sharp-pointed bone, would lance the gums here and there where the teeth were coming, after allowing the gums to bleed, they would rub some powdered root on the gums. As a preventive, old folks said to catch tiny baby mice and, after roasting them on the coals, feed them to the child. Coming Daylight, for instance, did that for her children, and none of them had any trouble with teething.

They would let babies crawl when they showed the inclination to do so, but the old women were sure that they always watched their babies more closely than mothers do today. They used to encourage them to walk by holding them up and helping them. It has been Coming Daylight's experience that boys learn to walk more quickly than girls. It may be, however, that more attention was given to boys.

The only expression the old women, or the younger ones for that matter, could think of that could be considered "baby talk" was that babies, when very small and just beginning to talk, say: "I" (prolonged and with strong glottal stop) if they do not like something or do not wish to take what is offered. This, together with *na'a* 'mother' and *ni'a* 'father,'[9]—which babies say properly

[9] These are vocative forms rather than descriptive forms.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

was just a shell. It must have been some kind of animal with a thin shell."

The concept of soul-loss as resulting from or accompanying sickness in certain cases was present. "It was held by the old people," The Boy said, "that a person's 'soul' was not inside his body or any organ thereof, but was near or around him. As a sick person got worse, his 'soul' kept getting farther and farther away. If it got too far away, he died. When a person was very sick, people would say: 'His soul is leaving (going away from) him farther and farther.'"[1] In brief, soul wandering or "soul-loss" was a preliminary to death rather than a cause of disease. We obtained no evidence that the concept of soul-stealing entered at all into Gros Ventre pathology.

Treatment of Illness

From the causes of disease we now pass to the treatment thereof. While some ailments and cases of illness were thought to be due to natural causes, and others to supernatural causes, the line of demarcation cannot always be sharply drawn. Likewise as regards the prevention and treatment, in some instances they were clearly looked upon by the Gros Ventres as of the purely natural or "rational" order, in others equally clearly of the supernatural order, in some few seemingly of both orders combined, in a few others of uncertain order. While the Gros Ventres quite explicitly distinguished in general theory and in certain specific cases between natural and supernatural prevention and treatment, in actual practice at times, and in many specific cases, they drew no sharp line between the two orders. In the following pages we shall take up first natural or "rational" prevention and treatment, secondly combined or doubtful types of treatment and lastly supernatural types. In general remedies and preventives fall into three more or less corresponding classes: "domestic" remedies known to and freely used by everybody; certain remedies more or less "rational," exclusively owned and used by particular non-profes-

[1] The soul was believed to "kind of leave" a person under stress of great fear. Cf. Flannery, 1953, 92.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

755
757 sional individuals; supernatural remedies used only by professional medicine men or women with power.

Natural Remedies

751
515 Both preventive and curative measures of the natural or rational order were numerous.

The most common preventive measure was the daily early morning plunge in the stream or roll in the snow by men, a practice carried out for hardening the body as well as for cleaning
[731] it. In small epidemics scattering and isolation were regularly resorted to in order to check the spread of the disease. The use of skunk fluid as a curative was more a Cree than a Gros Ventre procedure, but there was a Gros Ventre belief that skunk fluid diluted with water and put into the eyes of a person was a preventive and cure of snow-blindness. A mother, on knowing herself
[862] pregnant again, would cease nursing her infant lest it suffer from "bad stomach and diarrhea." Drinking the blood of a freshly butchered buffalo was looked upon as a preventive of tuberculosis.

757 Curative measures of the rational order were of many kinds. We recorded the following, but our list is far from exhaustive. All of them may best be classified as "domestic remedies," measures of common knowledge, resorted to by everybody who wished to use them, and not considered proprietary right of particular individuals.

757
278 Many herbal curatives came under this category.[3] The roots of "sweetheart briars," so called because the burrs stuck so tightly, were used for colds, and the deeper the root the stronger was the medicine.[4]

An infusion of peppermint is now used as a beverage by everybody for "fits, spasms and stomach disorders," although the medicinal use of peppermint was formerly the monopoly of Flat Pipe keepers. A very strong drink was made by boiling a certain root and just a little of it drunk as a cure for difficulty in urination.

[3] Cf. list in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 224-27. We made no attempt in the field to
[171] get a full list of such herbal and other curatives.

[4] The Piegan, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, used these as "blood medicine."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 ●
278

"Many people," The Boy remarked, "had died of this ailment as they were ashamed to tell they had it." According to Mary Ereaux, "a lot of times children were born with poor eyesight. If a fellow [adult] in those days had sore eyes he would be ashamed of it. It would have been a kind of disgrace. They had a kind of tea which they used as an eyewash."

For colds, the root of a briar, a plant with burrs smaller than "sand burrs," perhaps the "sweetheart briar" mentioned above, was chewed and the saliva swallowed. For "colds and sore throat, and teeth and bones," a bit of the root of a plant called "tastes-like-pepper" is broken off and kept in the mouth.

For head colds and headaches a snuff is made of the root of a large plant called "sneezer or pacifier,"[4] which grows up in the Rocky Mountains, and when snuffed up "it clears your head and mucus comes out. Every time you sneeze it kind of brings your cold out in a sweat."

Several plants used as fumigants or infusions for or by the mother before or after childbirth are described elsewhere.[5]

For children's dysentery (usually occurring in summer) and piles, Coming Daylight used a root called "stomach ache medicine," a root "which runs close to the surface of the ground." When one of her grandchildren "had piles from this summer dysentery" she heated a flat rock, saturated a cloth with water, sprinkled the medicine thereon, put the cloth on the hot rock to make steam, and held the child over it with its buttocks close to the steam. She also made a "tea" of the root and gave it to the child to drink. One treatment cured the piles. Coming Daylight remarked that she "wouldn't be without this medicine." This particular herbal curative is perhaps peculiar to her, and not in general use.

A curative called "fish medicine,"[6] "an old, old medicine," is a plant that grows in the water and is brought in from Minnesota.

"White medicine" has many curative uses. It is made from a "sort of sponge" [fungus] growing rarely on pine trees. When people find it, they throw stones at it and, being "kind of soft,"

---

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, 226.
[5] See Flannery, 1953, pp. 136, 138.
[6] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, 226, naw'asoo—for colds.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 278 it drops off. It is powdered before use. Mary Ereaux' mother used it, on a warm rag, for chickenpox. It was first gotten by a man who saw it in a dream and it said to him: "I am good for everything, to drink and to use externally too." It was this man who spread the knowledge of this medicine.[1]

For diarrhea a tea was made from the boiled roots of rose bush or cherry bush and drunk. For asthma and hay fever the vapor from juniper berries put in a pot of boiling water was considered helpful. Sage, in the very early days gathered and used only by sacred Pipe keepers, was later used by everybody: being rubbed and smelled for headache; the leaves especially the top ones, boiled and drunk for colds, coughs and tuberculosis.

The little daughter of Singer's husband, Iron Bucket, was "poisoned" [bewitched] on one occasion, when Singer was present, from some meat broth she had taken. After taking some of the broth, the little girl remarked "M-m-m this tastes funny." While Iron Bucket was telling stories, the little girl would interject from time to time the single word "moose." Finally she had a fit. They then gave her a lot of warm water as an emetic, and after she had vomited several times she recovered.

Raw liver and blood from a freshly butchered buffalo were considered as a cure for tuberculosis. Mary Ereaux' grandmother had told her that people would go after a man who had just butchered a buffalo to have him dip bits of the manifold in the warm blood and to have the children eat it as a delicacy.

Beaver oil from the oil sacs was used as medicine but we obtained no details.

[841] When a woman in her menses, or one who had been with a man the night before, entered the lodge of a sick person, the latter grew weaker. To protect the sick person fumigation was resorted to. Powdered beaver castor (always kept on hand if available, for this purpose) was put on live coals in a pan, and the patient without any clothing on, huddled beneath a blanket over the smoke so that it went all over the sick person's body.

757 Blood-letting was a common procedure, purely "rational" with no magic-religious element at all in it and calling for no "power"

[1] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, 226.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in the operator. It was resorted to for various ailments; tuberculosis, dizziness and "logginess" were specifically mentioned by our informants. "If the ailment were located somewhere above the waist the patient was bled at the elbow joint on the upper surface of the arm; if somewhere below the waist, on top of the instep." One arm might be opened in spring, the other in the fall. In the procedure described by the Boy, before the incision was made, the patient would put his hand on the ground and hold his arm rather rigid, while the operator squeezed and at the same time rubbed down the upper arm until the blood vessel at the bend of the arm bulged. In a slightly different procedure described by Singer, the patient's upper arm was tied very tight and "the blood was worked down;" then the large blood vessel on the upper side of the elbow joint was pierced with a very sharp chip off an "onyx stone,"* and the blood would spurt out; when the patient was sufficiently bled, a bit of buffalo fur was scorched, put over the incision, and kept in place without any dressing. By bedtime everything would be "okay."

Certain individuals, such as Thick's wife, and Woman Chief, were more skillful than others at bloodletting. On one occasion Singer's husband said to her: "Come on now. I want you to bleed me." She started to do so but "just had to yell," at which he said: "Why anyone would think that it was you who were going to bleed." Coming Daylight was still more reluctant to perform the operation. "In fact, I could never do it," she said, "because I cannot stand the sight of blood."

A tattoo-like surgical treatment was described by Coming Daylight, although Gros Ventres did not practice decorative tattooing. "For a while," she said, "it seemed like my hand would come unjointed and I could not use it very well. They took a bunch of needles and pierced my hand where it was hurting me. They told me: 'Now if you don't eat anything fried, it won't turn blue.' After piercing my hand they put some root on it, and it never got sore." She added: "They do that to the head, too."

Lancing of the gums of children when teething, elsewhere de-

* Singer showed the stone she owned from which the chip is struck. It was a shiny black one, but we did not identify it.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●757 scribed was, so far as we could gather, done by non-professionals as well as by professional doctors.[9]

752 According to Coming Daylight, one old woman whom she had apparently known in her earlier years and who was suffering severely from "cut-away" gave herself successful surgical treatment. She was in great pain and sometimes could not pass water or food, and besides her grown son had just been killed in battle. In her suffering and bereavement, she went out in the hills, taking with her a big heavy sewing needle, and saying: "Well, my son did not come back. Why should I keep on living." While out in the hills, she pierced herself in the stomach with the big needle, drew out the "bug" that was causing her illness, and pounded it on a rock. After that she got well.

Other surgical or quasi-surgical treatments were resorted to in case of bites by snakes, ticks, lizards, muskrats and wolves.

If you have been bitten by a rattlesnake, the procedure, according to Thick, is to take a horse hair, hold it taut in both hands, run it back and forth to locate the teeth [sic] left by the snake in your flesh, and then pluck out the teeth. If this is done at once after you are bitten, you will suffer no harm.

When Coming Daylight was a little girl, something big, thought by her to be perhaps a large tick, attached itself to her head behind the ear. The other children with whom she was playing held her and just knocked it off with a stick, and then her grandmother put medicine on the spot and the bite gave her no further trouble.

Singer described the case of a woman to whose left arm a little lizard had attached itself and was "sucking the skin." They just cut the lizard off. Coming Daylight was once bitten on a finger by a muskrat which kept its hold and nearly bit her finger off. Finally she poked a stick in the animal's nostril and gave a jab, and it wriggled its legs and let go. She still feels pain in the finger when she holds it in a certain position. According to her, too, people say that a wolf would sometimes "turn crazy" and enter the camp. All the people would then shut themselves up tightly in their lodges, but sometimes a person would be caught and bitten, and would go around as if "drunk or crazy, wild like the

[9] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 142.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
• NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

wolf." One woman, whom she knew, was so bitten, right on the mouth by such a "crazy wolf." The people held the woman tight, and when the wind was from the north faced her into it. Then they made a smudge of wolf fur and made her smell it, and so cured her. This was the customary treatment for such cases, after it, "the patient is not crazy any more." 752

The enema syringe was not known to The Boy. A smooth stick and/or grease might however be introduced into the rectum, when other curative measures failed. 757 •

For various ailments massaging was used by non-professionals as well as doctors with power. When Thomas Main was a boy, suffering from growing pains, he would lie down near the old women who were smoking and they would spit on their hands and rub them on his legs. A sick person, into whose lodge a woman in her menses had accidentally entered, would be massaged all over with beaver castor to keep from growing worse.

Two kinds of thermotherapy were recorded, warm wrappings and the sweat bath. When Coming Daylight's sister was recovering from smallpox, she was "one solid scab." To hasten recovery, her grandmother used to heat dry cloths and wrap them all around the girl.

While the sweat-bath was predominantly a magico-religious rite among the Gros Ventre, and often used or prescribed by professional doctors, it was sometimes—how commonly we could not determine—used by the laity as a purely rational curative procedure. Mary Ereaux' mother "always used to go in" to the sweat-lodge, keeping her head out. Other old women would keep head as well as body closed in. Coming Daylight used to go into a sweat-lodge and sweat when she "had rheumatism so bad I [she] couldn't move." Singer had built many sweat-lodges for her ailing husband, but she added: "they did not seem to make him feel any better."

On one occasion four Gros Ventre warriors, on their way up north, got into a swamp, shot down a queer-looking animal, like a buffalo or a "water-animal" [a moose?]. They ate the liver and it made them faint. When they came to, they built a sweat-lodge and sweated four times—perhaps in this case as a magico-religious procedure, our field data are not decisive.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 Thomas Main's grandfather would, from time to time when not feeling well, drink a large quantity of fairly warm water, perhaps two or three quarts, before eating breakfast. He would then go outside, put his finger in his throat, and vomit. This means, instead of a physic, was resorted to as a laxative.

As soon as the first thunder of spring was heard, a person with warts would blow on them and they would come off. This was apparently looked upon as a "rational" treatment, though it was possibly of the magical order.

158 726 755 The following cure, related by Coming Daylight and Singer, was of the natural order, but came about without intentional treatment. A young unmarried man, inseparable friend of Dressed In White, Coming Daylight's husband, had become mentally deranged. He would tear off his clothes and when they would catch him and put clothes on him he would run till he ran into the water. He would run everywhere, and would climb up the sides of lodges to the top. This condition lasted not very long before his cure in battle. Some Gros Ventres, including Dressed In White, Coming Daylight and the young man, while camped at Black Butte (now Havre, Mont.), were attacked by some Assiniboine. With all the noise and shooting, the Gros Ventre horses stampeded. Dressed In White ran with his gun toward the stampeding horses, and, as he did so, saw one of the enemy fall in their midst, try to get up, and fall again. Dressed In White shot at him three times and then his gun would not go off and in his anger at it he smashed it on the ground. At this juncture, the young man came along, and Dressed In White said to him: "Hurry and grab that enemy. He is trying to get on a horse." The young man ran over, grabbed the enemy by the hair on either side of the head, threw him to the ground, and held him there. The Assiniboine had a knife but no gun and was trying to get up, buttocks first. Another Gros Ventre, Cuts The Rope, now ran over and shot the Assiniboine, and all then hit him, counting coup on him. From that time on, the young man was quite cured of his mental derangement, or at least showed no more symptoms of it, but he was shot to death not long after by another Gros Ventre. "By getting an enemy single-handed this young man had become a big chief and could have lots of lovers."[10]

[10] Women admired brave young men. See Flannery, 1953, pp. 190-91.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

734 "The Crow knew the child was a Gros Ventre, so they took her along and caught up with the Gros Ventre camp. After they had eaten, they called all the Gros Ventres to listen. One of the Crow was standing there with the child. I was small then. I went and listened. Using the sign language he said: 'You folks were very mean to this child and her mother. The child was pitiful and somebody took pity on her. We picked her up and are going to keep her. We won't give her to you.'

"So this girl grew up with the Crow . . . she did not like the Gros Ventres and she took her mother's name . . . I do not know to this day why the mother was abandoned. She had no husband at the time they left her. The Gros Ventres," Coming Daylight added, "abandoned old people and babies."[11]

847 888

Proprietary Remedies

757 So far we have been dealing with preventive or curative measures of the "rational" order known to and freely used by anybody and everybody. We now come to those exclusively owned and used by particular individuals only. These proprietary remedies fall into two main classes,—although the dividing line was not always sharply drawn,—accordingly as they were owned and used by non-professionals with little or no supernatural power or by professional medicine men and women with well recognized supernatural power. Such proprietary remedies, as owned and used by non-professionals, seemed to have been looked upon as of either the "rational" or supernatural order. Those owned and used by professional doctors as, in the main, of the supernatural order. We shall now take up these two classes, first, proprietary remedies used by non-professionals.

Coming Daylight emphatically insisted that she was not a medicine woman, not a "holy" person. "Some people try to pray through me, they lay their hands on my head and pray for something, as if I were a 'holy' person. But I am not. I do not claim to be a medicine woman. I never go around doctoring others. I just keep

[11] For other cases of abandonment, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 76, 132, 189, 198-99.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

them (remedies, as infra) in the family." Her mother's sister, Good Singer, had a ghost helper and was also a "real" doctor or medicine woman. Coming Daylight was given by Good Singer three kinds of medicine, including headache and stomach ache medicine to use for her own children and grandchildren. Coming Daylight also was given by her maternal grandmother who "knew all kinds of medicines," three medicines to hasten childbirth, to bring the mother's milk, and to cure stomach ache. Coming Daylight has used these within the family to doctor her children and grandchildren, still had them, and, in accordance with her grandmother's wish that they be passed on, was going to pass them on to her granddaughter whom she reared. If she should use any of these medicines for patients not of her family they would have to pay her, else the medicine would not be effective. 757

One of The Boy's daughters, without quest, perhaps in a dream, was given curing power which she used only within the family. She would treat her mother and the children for pains and aches by pressing and massaging.

Possession of such proprietary herbal and other remedies gotten by gift or dream, with or without quest, and used by non-professionals within the family or other limited circle may have been much more widespread than the above meager field evidence might imply.

Before we pass on to the consideration of curative powers possessed by professional medicine men and women, it may be well at this point to record the ritual observed in the gathering of plants for medicine, whether or not the gatherer possessed supernatural curing power proper. 757 824

This ritual was observed in the gathering of medicinal plants only, not of berries, wild turnips and other plant foods. The proper time to gather medicinal plants, or least some of them, was the fall. Coming Daylight's grandmother told her: "You don't want to pick anything [any herbal curative] until the seeds drop, because it would be like destroying a body." Not everyone had the right to gather medicinal plants, at least not all kinds. Certain herbal curatives at least could be picked only by those who had been given power, through quest or dream or through transfer.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

757 824 Some evil such as sickness or death would befall an unauthorized gatherer. When the right to gather a particular medicinal plant was transferred, the transferrer would take the transferee out and show him or her the growing plant and tell the name.

When a medicinal root was dug, some offering, such as a bit of tobacco or a necklace of beads, was put in the ground in its place, or in the case of gathering "white medicine" [fungus?], was placed alongside the tree. In making this offering a short prayer was said. The content and wording of the prayer differed from individual to individual. According to The Boy the gatherer would take the bit of tobacco and pray with it, saying, "I am going to use your medicine." "Your" would have reference to the Gros Ventre concept that the medicines while gotten immediately from a bear or rock or other inferior creature came ultimately from the Supreme Being. His name would be mentioned first in the prayer and so acknowledged as the one to whom all things, even these roots, ultimately belonged. The Last Child would be mentioned last and would get some share in the tobacco offered.

According to Singer, "When we take a [medicinal] root, we say: 'I give you this. I am putting something in your place. I didn't take you for nothing!' We talk like we are talking to a person. Most Indians have the same way." Coming Daylight who was present explained: "We are talking to Our Lord and we never leave out the Sun," and apparently the Last Child was included. She further explained on another occasion: "When they dig the [medicinal] root, they have something to put in place of it and they say: 'I am taking this. Have pity on us. Whatever way I may use this [root], may I be successful in my work.' Then they cover over the hole made by extracting the root. It is kind of buying it like." "Then when you have some of this medicine and pass it on, the receiver gives you something for it."

Doctoring Power

756 What kinds of power did professional medicine men and women possess? In attempting to answer it, we wish to emphasize that while certain individuals (such as Stiffarm) who effected cures, were definitely recognized as professional doctors with super-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

powerful men to die. That particular man Drops In The Fire, however, always claimed to be bullet proof."

When, on one occasion, one of Coming Daylight's daughters was very ill, the wife of Buffalo Run finally cured the girl. "I called in Stiffarm," Coming Daylight said, "who demanded a large amount of things for payment, because he said the girl had this stomach diseasse [cancer?]. He wanted my husband, Little Man, to make him a lodge and he would doctor the girl. But I said: 'No. My daughter hasn't got that disease. I don't want you to make that lodge.' Then we got another medicine man, whose daughter had died at the Mission. Finally I said: 'I am going to take my daughter to someone who can cure her.'

"So I told my husband to load food and wood. I took my daughter down below Stiffarm's place, to where Buffalo Run (or Chase) used to live with his wife. There was the woman who was the medicine woman. When I got there, she said to me, just teasing: 'Where is this mean woman going?' I handed her the pipe and told her to smoke it, and she took it, which meant she would do what I was asking her to do. I said to her: 'I want you to get my daughter well.' And I gave her the grub to eat and some wood. She said to me, just teasing like: 'So you had to come to me, this mean woman!' Then she said: 'If you do what I tell you to do, I will get your daughter well. You are to leave her here with me and I will give her medicine every day and tend to her (that is, put medicine all over her, make her drink it, and draw the thing out).' So I and my husband left my daughter there and we went home alone. Every now and then I took grub and wood to the medicine woman. Sure enough, not long after that my daughter got well. Soon after that she married, and she is alive and well today." Good Singer, Coming Daylight's mother's sister, had an ancestral helper[14] and was also a practicing doctor. We recorded her doctoring song, as sung by The Boy, song number 28, and by Coming Daylight, song number 122.

A cure by Good Singer was described by Singer. "Once the man I was living with was very ill, almost dead. One of his wives—he had several besides myself,—called in this medicine woman, Good Singer.

[14] Cf. Flannery, 1944, pp. 55-56.

8:Flannery E-5 (1940-1948)1960 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

"My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the traditional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard